



# STATE OF COLORADO

## FLEXTIME

### Maximizing Human Resource Potential

Prepared by the Division of Human Resources in the Colorado Department of Personnel & Administration  
(Revised May 2002)

#### What is flextime?

Flextime is a way to redesign or restructure traditional work schedules so the employee works daily hours different from regular office hours or works a full schedule in fewer days. Employers can use this option to accommodate the changing workforce and business needs. Employees can use innovative scheduling to fulfill a variety of personal needs, including family responsibilities, routine health appointments, educational activities, and volunteer and wellness activities. This type of scheduling is flexible enough to be used on an ongoing or as-needed basis. For example, the employee may take two hours to attend parent-teacher conferences and then make up the time during the same workweek. Flextime allows an employee to manage personal and work activities without lost work time. Reduced work time (e.g., job sharing) and flexible work sites are also forms of alternative work arrangements and can be used in conjunction with flextime, but the focus here is on restructured work schedules.

#### Flextime Options

The most common form of flextime is a fixed schedule where the employee works the same set hours each day but it varies from the regular core business hours of the office, e.g., 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in an office that is normally open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Other flextime options include the following.

- **Daily Flex-schedule** -- a flexible schedule where the employee is free to set his/her own work hours within limits established by management. There are three components.
  - *Core Period* -- the hours in a workday when all staff are needed, e.g., 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., when meetings are likely to be scheduled, customer contact is heaviest, etc.
  - *Bandwidth* -- the identified hours during which managers allow flexible scheduling (includes the core period). It defines the earliest time employees may arrive and the latest time they may leave, e.g., 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.

- *Flexible Hours* -- the hours an employee chooses to work. Under one approach, work schedules can vary daily within the band without prior approval as long as the full workweek is completed. A variation is *staggered work hours* where employees begin and end at individually based, fixed times that do not change daily but may periodically change on specific dates. The arrangement can be used on a permanent or temporary basis, e.g., to make up missed time.
- **Compressed workweek** -- a flexible schedule where a full workweek is completed in fewer than five days by increasing the number of hours worked per day. The more common examples are the four-day (10 hours per day) or three-day (12 hours per day) workweeks.
- **5 x 4 workweek** -- a flexible schedule where four days are worked in one week and five in the next for a total of 80 hours. There are variations on this type of schedule. The key is working 80 hours over a two-week period. This arrangement may require the redefinition of a workweek for employees who are eligible for overtime (two 40-hour weeks).

### **Is flextime allowed by the state personnel system?**

Several Executive Orders endorse flextime as an appropriate and beneficial employment practice and urge managers to use the concept as business needs permit. An Executive Order also establishes the state's employer policy on work-related family issues. This policy promotes flexibility and innovation in job design and work hours. Managers are expected to make every reasonable effort to deal with work-life issues equitably, flexibly, and compassionately without adversely affecting the mission of the agency. By increasing awareness and use, the state can maximize the benefits from these creative, flexible arrangements.

### **Who is eligible?**

Any employee is eligible; however, not every job lends itself to flextime. It will depend on the nature of the job and the business needs of the work unit. Flextime is voluntary. Only the employee with an identified, documented performance problem should not be offered this option. Also, the manager may exclude an employee whose presence is critical during standard work hours, e.g., assembly line operations or small offices where no alternate coverage is available. Because of the requirement to pay overtime to employees in overtime-eligible jobs, flextime schedules for these employees should be developed carefully. Flextime is not a right but a business arrangement. No employee is entitled to flextime and approval of the arrangement is the sole discretion of the employer.

### **What are the benefits of flextime?**

- *Improved service and image.* The work unit may be able to keep the office open to the public for more hours, giving greater access to services and an improved image of the agency.

- *Reduced congestion in traffic and parking lots.* Employees reduce the number of commuting trips and often when they do commute, it is during non-peak hours.
- *Competitive edge.* It can increase the pool of qualified job applicants who otherwise might not be available or willing to consider state jobs. It also helps retain valuable employees because they can adjust their hours to meet personal needs instead of having to use leave or resign. Studies show that one of the top demands from today's workforce is flexibility to deal with personal and career needs. This research also shows that increasing numbers of employees have turned down "better" job offers (more money) in favor of a less rigid working environment.
- *Less use of paid leave.* Employees have more time to schedule personal matters during convenient non-work times instead of having to take leave. For example, appointments can be scheduled during non-work hours or time can more easily be made up. The employer does not lose productivity due to "down time."
- *Better use of equipment.* Congestion at office machines can be relieved, thus avoiding additional purchases.
- *Better organization of work.* Workflow and scheduling must be carefully planned to fit the workforce to the workload. Periods of peak activity and idle time are better managed so that more work can be done in the same number of hours.
- *Better management practices.* Productivity is more validly judged by measuring results or contributions vs. watching time clocks. Time is scheduled more effectively. For example, meetings, visits and phone calls can be scheduled during core hours. More "quiet" time can be created to tackle work requiring concentration. The result is better time management practices.
- *Improved productivity.* Employees feel more control over part of their work environment so they are more satisfied with their work. With improved satisfaction and morale comes more productivity. Flextime can result in greater efficiency and quality of service, e.g., more continuous time to work with a 4x10 schedule. Studies report that employees who are satisfied with their work environment and supervisory relationship deliver better customer service, resulting in improved customer satisfaction.
- *Better managers.* In an atmosphere of mutual trust and cooperation, managers can become more effective through improved relations, greater employee participation in the management of the unit, increased productivity and quality of service, etc. A manager has an opportunity to practice skills and enhance his/her personal reputation as a good manager.

- *No cost option.* The work place can be improved at no cost. In some cases, overtime costs can be reduced or eliminated through improved work planning and scheduling while increasing hours of coverage or service.

### **What are the drawbacks of flextime?**

- It takes planning and adjustment to set up flextime initially. Thought must be given to supervisory arrangements, adequate staffing, communication, and coordination and completion of work assignments and performance management.
- The nature of business and characteristics of a job or employee may not be appropriate for flextime.
- Without clear and adequate communication, there is a possibility that flextime may come to be viewed as an entitlement.

### **How is a flextime schedule created?**

Flextime requires planning. The more carefully planned, the more likely all involved will see the benefits and the better the chances for success. Employee involvement in the planning, implementation, and evaluation is strongly encouraged as it can lead to better business decisions for the work unit.

1. **Develop a plan.** Consider all aspects and potential impacts on the work unit. Create a plan that outlines the specific arrangement for the work unit. What is gained by using flextime? Define the objectives and the benefits or impact to the work unit, manager, employee, co-workers, and customers.

Examine the work culture, nature of business, and operational needs for the work unit to determine if flextime is feasible, e.g., level of trust, level of management support, nature of services and jobs, amount of “face time” required as opposed to results, other flexible practices already in place. How will processes be used to document hours worked and results achieved? What about accessibility in case of a business emergency or when the employee needs to be physically present?

Consider the appropriateness of flextime for the jobholder, e.g., performance record, level of independence, demonstrated self-discipline and motivation, desire or ability to work longer days.

2. **Develop selection criteria.** The manager determines what factors to consider when making decisions on requests but primary is always operational needs in relation to job assignments and then the jobholders. These factors should be worked out ahead of time and be part of the written plan.

- *Establish criteria for approving requests.* Some ideas include possible benefits to the organization, potential drawbacks, requests by others in the work unit, duties of the job and if they can be effectively performed with the new schedule, the level of staffing and supervision needed at various times, the level of service that would be provided to customers, the schedules of other employees outside the work unit with whom the job must coordinate, etc.
  - *Establish a way to break ties for requests.* Some ideas include performance, seniority, draw lots, or rotation.
  - *Establish sanctions for abuse.* Under what circumstances will the schedule be terminated? Examples of abuse include inaccurate time sheets or a continuing decrease in productivity that indicates an employee is not working during flexible hours. Remember, even in cases where there is no abuse, the arrangement may be discontinued at any time.
3. **Submit a written request.** The employee submits a written request to the manager detailing the specific schedule desired. It should be submitted well in advance of the desired start date for the new schedule. The employee should be prepared to discuss the details of the request and participate in resolving any issues.
  4. **Communicate and decide.** The key to success is mutual trust and respect. The employee and manager should meet to discuss any concerns, jointly resolve differences, and reach an understanding on the terms of the arrangement.
  5. **Document.** It is advisable to document the specific arrangement. Remember that flextime is a privilege, not a right, and may need to be modified for business reasons. Both should remain flexible because both have an interest in making the arrangement work. Both are also accountable for responsible use of flextime.

***Hint:*** Try a pilot or trial run to test one or more options for a few months and address issues as they come up. Expect some adjustments along the way.

For more information, contact your agency human resources office. The Statewide Work-Life Coordinator can also provide information. Call (303) 866-2455 and ask for help with flextime.

## SAMPLE FORM A

### FLEXTIME REQUEST/AGREEMENT

#### I. *(Employee completes this section.)*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Class Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Exempt: \_\_\_\_\_ Non-Exempt: \_\_\_\_\_  
Division: \_\_\_\_\_

List your current schedule and the requested schedule.

Current Start and Stop Times		Requested Start & Stop Times	
Sunday		Sunday	
Monday		Monday	
Tuesday		Tuesday	
Wednesday		Wednesday	
Thursday		Thursday	
Friday		Friday	
Saturday		Saturday	
Total Work Hours		Total Work Hours	

How will your proposed schedule sustain or enhance your ability to get the job done and the ability of the work unit to maintain production and service?

What potential challenges, including potential additional costs, could your changed requested schedule raise with:

External Customers	
Internal Customers	
Co-workers	
Your Manager	

How do you suggest overcoming any challenges with these groups?

What reasonable measurements would you propose for you and your manager to constructively monitor the flextime schedule and assess how your performance (e.g., productivity and service) is meeting or exceeding expectations? Are there measurable outcomes to use? Be as quantitative as possible.

#### II. *(Division Director or designee completes this section.)*

Request for flextime is \_\_\_\_\_ approved. Effective date of flextime: \_\_\_\_\_ Ending date if temporary \_\_\_\_\_  
Request for flextime is \_\_\_\_\_ declined. If declined, please describe why: \_\_\_\_\_

#### III.

We understand that prior approval is required, including any subsequent change to a different flextime schedule. Approval is the sole discretion of the Division Director or designee and, if approved, may be modified or discontinued at any time. The employee may also request to discontinue an approved flextime schedule at any time.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Division Director's (or designee's) signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Employee's signature \_\_\_\_\_

**SAMPLE FORM B****FLEXTIME REQUEST/AGREEMENT****I. Employee**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Class title: \_\_\_\_\_ Exempt ☐ Non-Exempt ☐  
Division: \_\_\_\_\_ Work unit/section: \_\_\_\_\_

**II. Workweek**

<b>Current Schedule</b>	<b>Start/Stop Times</b>		<b>Proposed Schedule</b>	<b>Start/Stop Times</b>
Sunday			Sunday	
Monday			Monday	
Tuesday			Tuesday	
Wednesday			Wednesday	
Thursday			Thursday	
Friday			Friday	
Saturday			Saturday	
<b>Total work hours</b>			<b>Total work hours</b>	

**III. Suitability**

*How will the proposed schedule affect the ability of you and your work unit to get the job done? Please note to what extent your work depends on customers or other staff, requires the presence of a supervisor, how productivity can be measured, the impact on co-workers, and the impact on customer service.*

**IV. Approvals**

*Flextime is a management tool and the primary consideration is always business need, and approval of an alternative work schedule is at the sole discretion of the appointing authority. It is a privilege, not a right or benefit, and an approved schedule may be discontinued or modified at any time.*

Employee signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Appointing authority signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Approved. Effective date: \_\_\_\_\_ End date (if temporary): \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Declined. Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please file a copy of this document with the Human Resources Office*

## SAMPLE FORM C

### FLEXTIME REQUEST/AGREEMENT

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Work Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Requested Work Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Approval: \_\_\_\_\_

Basis for Request:

*Describe the basis for your request as it relates to the compatibility of your job with an alternate schedule and the impact on the business needs of your work unit, such as your workload, responsiveness to customers, impact on co-workers, and staff coverage in the unit.*

**Supervisor:** Submit completed request form to manager if outside 7:00 to 6:00, Monday through Friday.



**SAMPLE FORM D**

**FLEXTIME REQUEST/AGREEMENT**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Division: \_\_\_\_\_ Exempt: \_\_\_\_ Non-Exempt: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Work Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Requested Work Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Approval: \_\_\_\_\_

Basis for Request: describe how your job is suitable for flextime and the impact on the business needs of your work unit, such as your workload, responsiveness to customers, impact on co-workers, staff coverage, etc.

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\_\_\_\_\_ Request is approved and effective on \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Request is declined

Division Director (or delegated authority) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_